

SAMHSA's 2014 Native American Service to Science Initiative

Application Background Information

Information for Prospective Applicants

SAMHSA's Native American Service to Science initiative—a collaboration between SAMHSA's Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center (Tribal TTAC) and SAMHSA's Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPT)—is intended for innovative prevention programs developed by and for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations. Established in 2008, the initiative's long-range purpose is two-fold: (1) to support innovative tribal interventions seeking to demonstrate and document evidence of effectiveness, and (2) to increase the number and array of evidence-based interventions from which tribal communities can select to address substance abuse. Through a combination of training events and customized technical assistance (TA), this national initiative assists tribal program developers, implementers, and evaluators in applying more rigorous and culturally-grounded evaluation methodologies to their work.

Since 2008, more than 30 programs across the U.S. have been selected to participate in the Native American Service to Science initiative. These programs have operated in such diverse settings as community-based organizations, schools, and health clinics; served diverse populations and addressed SAMHSA priorities related to substance abuse prevention and mental health promotion.

Applications must be completed no later than Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5:00pm PST (8:00pm EST).

Before completing the application, you are strongly encouraged to ***carefully read all introductory sections of the application*** below so that you understand the eligibility criteria and how to apply.

Eligibility Criteria

Eligible participants include practitioners or local evaluators who represent **innovative tribal substance abuse prevention programs** interested in demonstrating their program's effectiveness using more rigorous evaluation methods. These programs must **serve AI/AN populations specifically** and be:

- **Focused on the prevention of substance abuse** and, if relevant, related behavioral health problems. The program should *not* focus on the treatment of individuals diagnosed with mental illness or substance abuse disorders.
- **Innovative in design or focus:** These include *new* services, programs, practices, or policies that are distinguished by their creativity, originality, and utility. Innovative programs *do not include* existing evidence-based programs or combinations of existing evidence-based programs. However, existing evidence-based programs *significantly adapted* for specific population groups or substance abuse problems with which they were not originally tested also qualify as innovative. Programs must also be first-time recipients of Service to Science services.
- **Responsive to local tribal needs:** These are programs that address local substance abuse prevention and related behavioral health needs (and gaps in service to address those needs) in

tribal settings, as identified through the application of SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework.

- **Fills gaps in the prevention evidence base:** Nominees should be programs that address substance abuse risk and protective factors and/or problems for which few or no evidence-based prevention interventions have been developed. *Examples include, but are not limited to:*
 - Preventing or reducing adverse childhood experiences and related consequences
 - Addressing parental rejection and homelessness among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth
 - Incorporating cultural practices and traditions into prevention programming
 - Integrating mental health promotion with substance abuse prevention for high-risk populations (e.g., those who have experienced trauma)
 - Preventing prescription drug abuse and misuse
 - Preventing or reducing high-risk or problem drinking among adults (especially those not attending college)
 - Preventing or reducing marijuana misuse and abuse (in light of recent state laws decriminalizing marijuana use in general and for medical purposes)
- **Informed by practical experience:** These include programs developed with or informed by input from the AI/AN populations served and/or based on practical experience working with the populations in the setting in which the program is delivered. When organizations apply to the Native American Service to Science initiative, they must demonstrate that they are rooted in the community they serve.
- **Focused on alleviating behavioral health disparities:** Participating programs must target AI/AN populations affected by substance abuse, or by substance abuse associated with trauma and mental health problems.
- **Committed to evaluation:** Programs must be willing to dedicate the effort and time required to enhance the rigor of program evaluation. Programs must have a funding level sufficient to operate for at least one year and be ready and eager to build evaluation capacity. Based on our experience, programs that commit time to the Native American Service to Science process are more likely to achieve progress in building their evaluation capacity.

SAMHSA Priorities

In addition to the above criteria, SAMHSA is interested in programs that address **Goals 1 through 4 of SAMHSA's Strategic Initiative #1: Prevention of Substance Abuse and Mental Illness** (for more information on SAMHSA's Strategic Initiatives, see: <http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA11-4629/01-FullDocument.pdf>):

1. With primary prevention as the focus, build *emotional health*, prevent or delay onset of, and mitigate symptoms and complications from *substance abuse* and *mental illness*.
2. Prevent or reduce consequences of *underage drinking* and *adult problem drinking*.
3. Prevent *suicides* and *attempted suicides* among populations at high risk, especially: military families; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth; and AI/AN populations.
4. Reduce prescription drug misuse and abuse.

Application Components

The Native American Service to Science initiative application includes five sections: *Program Profile*, *Evaluation Activities*, *Abstract*, *Narrative*, and *Appendices*. Only SAMHSA's Tribal TTAC and CAPT staff and consultants will see completed application forms. Submitted applications will be referenced for the

sole purpose of determining acceptance to participate in the 2014 Native American Service to Science initiative—applications will not be shared with others outside of the Tribal TTAC or the CAPT without permission of the applicant.

- I. **Program Profile:** The program profile *is not scored*, but it must be completed for the application to be accepted. It provides information that allows us to determine if the program meets the basic requirements for participation. This section includes items related to the following:
 - The organization's type
 - The organization's service area
 - The program's staffing patterns
 - The program's general prevention strategy
 - The program's target population(s)
 - The program's funding
- II. **Evaluation Activities:** The evaluation activities section *is not scored*, but is required. Importantly, this section also *does not impact your eligibility or selection for participation in the Native American Service to Science initiative*. The information you provide will help to determine which evaluation TA providers are best matched to your program's needs, should your application be accepted.
- III. **Abstract:** The abstract *is not scored*, but must be completed for the application to be accepted. It may be used in reports to SAMHSA about the Service to Science initiative. Provide a 200-word summary of the program, policy, or intervention nominated to participate in Service to Science.
- IV. **Narrative:** Provide a description of your program, your management plan, and how you intend to use the Service to Science TA. **This description should be no longer than 15 double-spaced pages, 12 point font, with one-inch margins.** It will be scored (up to 70 points) and should include the following information:
 - A. **Program Rationale (22 points):** In this section, describe why your program is needed, including information on the following:
 - The general substance abuse and, if relevant, related mental health problems to be addressed in your tribal community and/or among American Indian/Alaska Native populations
 - Factors that contribute to or protect against the substance abuse and, if relevant, related mental health problem(s) identified in your tribal community or among American Indian/Alaska Native populations
 - Consequences of, or related mental health problems associated with, the substance abuse problem(s) identified
 - How the program addresses identified contributing factors to, protective factors against, or consequences of substance abuse and, if relevant, related mental health problems
 - Gaps in existing community services or programming that address the identified problem and those factors that contribute to or protective against the problem
 - How your program addresses these gaps in substance abuse prevention programming or services for American Indian/Alaska Native populations
 - The program's anticipated substance abuse and other relevant outcomes, including related risk and protective factors
 - How outcomes link to state prevention priorities or SAMHSA Strategic Initiatives (<http://www.samhsa.gov/about/strategy.aspx>)

- B. Core Program Elements (14 points):** This section should include information on the essential program elements, including the following:
- What the elements include (i.e., the essential approaches, strategies, methods, products, or practices delivered) and how they are responsive to the gaps/needs identified in the rationale
 - To whom the elements are delivered (i.e., characteristics of the population served and the program's attention to cultural factors) and the extent to which elements or activities are attentive to the needs of the American Indian/Alaska Natives, including cultural factors
 - How the program elements were designed based on input from or practical experience with the American Indian/Alaska Native populations
 - Where the program elements are implemented (i.e., the program setting or where the program is delivered)
 - When elements are implemented (i.e., the length and intensity of program elements or the dates or amount of exposure to program elements)
 - Why these elements are implemented (i.e., why they will lead to anticipated outcomes)
- C. Program Innovativeness (18 points):** In this section, explain how your program is innovative—how it is a *new* service, practice, policy, or program distinguished by its creativity, originality, and utility. Note that innovative programs do *not* include existing evidence-based programs or combinations of existing evidence-based programs.
- Note.** Existing evidence-based programs that have been significantly adapted for American Indian/Alaska Native populations, or to address substance abuse problems with which they were not originally tested, *do qualify as innovative*.
- Specifically, note how your program is:
- a new or different service, practice, or policy that has not been implemented by others to address the problem on which you are focusing;
 - distinguishable from other programs by its creativity or originality; and
 - distinguishable from other programs by its utility, practicality, or feasibility.
- D. Program Management (8 points):** In this section, describe your organizational capacity to implement the nominated program and, more specifically, how the program gets implemented and who is responsible for implementation. Include a description of the following:
- The agency's organizational structure and how the program fits into that structure (if possible, append an organizational chart)
 - The individuals who oversee and implement program activities (including their roles and responsibilities)
 - The quality assurance procedures that are in place to ensure that the program is well-implemented and meets the needs of those who participate or who are served
 - The ways that the program or organization is associated or collaborates with, or supports, other local or tribal-level prevention efforts and systems
- E. Native American Service to Science Technical Assistance (TA) Plan (8 points):** In this section, describe how you plan to use the evaluation TA available through the initiative to strengthen your evaluation or evaluation plan. This section should include the following information:
- Current gaps or challenges in your evaluation or evaluation plan that you would like addressed through Service to Science TA

- Evaluation enhancements on which you would like to focus, and some explanation of why you chose this focus
- Program or agency staff, including the evaluator (if applicable), who will work with the designated TA providers on evaluation enhancements
- How staff will work with the designated TA provider to enhance evaluation, including specific evaluation tasks and dedication of staff time

V. Appendices: The items you choose to include as appendices *will not be scored* and *there is no limit*. However, we ask that you use *careful judgment when selecting materials*, and that you *reference each appendix* in your narrative to provide the application reviewer a sense of why each appendix was included. We encourage you to assemble as appendices any existing materials you have that elaborate on the different topics above. We are not asking you to produce any materials that do not already exist, but to share with us what is already available. The following are some examples of items to include*:

- Program and evaluation logic models
- Agency or organizational annual reports
- Organizational charts
- Program brochures
- Evaluation reports or publications of findings
- Articles submitted for publication
- Data collection tools
- Videos describing your program's setting, strategies, or population served

Note. The purpose of Native American Service to Science TA is to improve evaluation capacity, including strengthening program design, to achieve expected outcomes. The purpose of the Native American Service to Science initiative is **not** to assist in developing program curriculum. You may submit program curricula in order to provide reviewers and TA providers with a better sense of program activities. Since we understand that these materials are highly proprietary, **SAMHSA's Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center will neither copy nor keep any part of these materials**. Rather, curricular material will be returned to the program at the end of the Service to Science year.

How Applications Are Assessed

From the pool of applicants, the Tribal TTAC and the CAPT will select up to five programs from across the country to participate. Programs that submit the necessary program materials, demonstrate a willingness to participate, have budgeted for program evaluation, and meet the criteria described in the sections above stand the best chance of being selected. Pending the availability of FY2014 funds, programs are selected to participate in the 2014 Native American Service to Science initiative through the following process:

- Members of SAMHSA's Tribal TTAC Expert Panel review and score each application carefully, recommending applicants for participation based on their scores. The panel comprises experts who geographically and culturally represent the diverse field of AI/AN substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment. SAMHSA's CAPT staff will also review applications to ensure that minimum eligibility requirements are met.
- Approximately one month after submitting their applications, SAMHSA's TTAC and the CAPT will notify programs of their status—accepted or not accepted. Accepted applicants will also receive contact information for their assigned evaluation TA provider(s).

Ultimately, the initiative is looking for programs that demonstrate the motivation, commitment, and potential to advance their program along a continuum of evidence of effectiveness. The emphasis of the selection process is on *commitment to improving evaluation efforts*. Since the goal of the Native American Service to Science initiative is to improve programs' evaluation efforts, the level of current evaluation rigor will **not** be a factor in determining program participation.

In reviewing applications, SAMHSA's Tribal TTAC may assign additional value to certain applications that address programmatic categories or demographic areas that have been under-represented in the past. However, selection will be based primarily on qualification—for example, the most motivated, the most innovative, or in the best position to improve the rigor of their evaluation methods.

- *Importantly, programs **will not be required to share their evaluation data or findings** with SAMSHA, the Tribal TTAC, or the CAPT.*

Please send all applications by email or fax to:

Seprieono Locario, M.A.
Training and Technical Assistance Director
SAMHSA's Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center (Tribal TTAC)
Phone: (301) 257-2762
Email: slocario@tribaltechllc.com

** Please note: If you do not have (or are unable to scan and send) electronic copies of appendices, then you may mail them to the above address **before the application deadline**.*

Applications must be completed no later than Friday, April 25, 2014 at 5:00pm PST (8:00pm EST).

If you have any questions about the 2014 Native American Service to Science initiative, please contact either of the following individuals:

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